

For Immediate Release
4/24/2012

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***Issued by AES as a Service for the Lakes to
Land Regional Initiative***



LAKES TO LAND REGIONAL INITIATIVE BEGINS

MANISTEE AND BENZIE COUNTIES - The largest intergovernmental collaborative effort of its kind in Michigan has begun, the Lakes to Land Regional Initiative, where eight townships and a city in Manistee and Benzie counties will work in unison to develop master plans, recreational plans and a collaborative implementation strategy.

The Initiative is funded under a \$157,000 grant from the Michigan Economic Vitality Incentive Program administered by the Michigan Department of Treasury and a \$65,000 grant from the CS Mott Foundation.

Participating local governments include Onekama, Arcadia, Pleasanton and Bear Lake Townships in Manistee County; Blaine, Gilmore, Joyfield and Crystal Lake Townships in Benzie County and the City of Frankfort in Benzie County. Onekama Township and the City of Frankfort have recently completed master plans and are participating only in the portion of the project to develop a collaborative implementation strategy.

The project is guided by a leadership team consisting of at least two representatives from each of the participating local governments. Leadership team members are responsible for guiding the work of the consultant they selected, Beckett & Raeder, for keeping their planning commissions, boards and other entities informed and involved, for encouraging participation by all interests in the development of the plans and strategies and for providing continuity between planning and implementation phases.

Leadership team members include:

Local Government/Leadership Team Members

Onekama Township: Susan Barnard and David Meister

Arcadia Township: Brad Hopwood and Greg Wisner

Bear Lake Township: Janette May, Bill Ringel and Deanna Pattison

Pleasanton Township: Kris Kranz and Bob Peterson

Blaine Township: Chuck Beale, Dave Long, Don Smeltzer, and Dan Bitner

Gilmore Township: Dennis Holcomb, Robert Delanoy, and Carolyn Feltes

Joyfield Township: Betsy Evans, Tom Hart, Matt Emery, Ted Wood, Guy Sauer, and Susan Zenker

Crystal Lake Township: Sandy Skees, Monica Schultz, Sharon May, and Jim Laarman

City of Frankfort: Bruce Ogilvie and James Campbell

Additional governmental units may choose to join the project until June.

"The master plans will provide all townships with an opportunity to involve all interests in defining a course for their future," said Brad Hopwood, who chairs the leadership team for the project. The recreation plans will help us more fully understand how we can harness the full potential of resources in our respective townships. And by working together in unison, the governmental units will identify collaborative opportunities involving two or more of the participating jurisdictions that are of mutual benefit. I am particularly interested in defining how Arcadia Township can work with our neighbors in establishing corridors for economic development, recreation, tourism, non-motorized transportation, agriculture and other areas of focus that make sense as well as looking at opportunities for service sharing to reduce government costs."

Two information meetings will be held on May 23 and 24, 2012 to introduce the purpose, goals and objectives, opportunities for public participation, and schedule for the project.

The May 23 meeting will be held from 7-8:30 p.m. at Bear Lake High School Gym.

The May 24 meeting will be held from 7-8:30 p.m. at the Frankfort Elementary School Gym.

Community Visioning sessions will kick off the master plan development process in each of the participating townships during the week of June 14. Dates, locations and times will be announced.

Information about the Lakes to Land Regional Initiative will be available on line at www.lakestoland.org. All meetings of the Leadership Team are open to the public and are held at the Pleasant Valley Community Center in Arcadia, located on Glover's Lake Road.

Groups or individuals that want to be kept informed about the Initiative are encouraged to do so by contacting Jami Klomp, Alliance for Economic Success, 1361 US 31 South, Manistee, MI 49660 or jami@allianceforeconomicsuccess.com to receive information by email or regular mail.

The Alliance for Economic Success assisted the Leadership Team in securing the grant funding for the project.